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CHINA'S SPY BALLOON LIKELY GUIDED BY A.I., SAYS EXPERT

The balloon spotted over US seems to have advanced steering technologies, an expert on spy balloons said

MAY REMAIN OVER U.S. FOR FEW MORE DAYS

The Pentagon too said the balloon is carrying advanced sensors and surveillance equipment and is manoeuvrable, disputing the Chinese claim that it has limited steering ability. Indicating there's no plan to take it down immediately, the Pentagon said the balloon may stay over the US for few more days, adding it posses no threat the people below

SECOND ONE SPOTTED OVER LATIN AMERICA

- The row has further strained US-China ties. The White House slammed China for violating US sovereignty and Beijing hit back, accusing the US of using it as a pretext to attack China
- Amid escalating tensions, Pentagon said it spotted a second high-altitude Chinese spy balloon flying over Latin America | PTI

46K feet

THE HEIGHT AT WHICH THE BALLOON IS FLOATING OVER THE U.S.

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Tax benefits off for funds to trusts named after the Gandhi family

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

IN another attack on the legacy of the Nehru-Gandhi family, the Finance Bill of the Budget 2023 introduced a provision that excludes donations to three trusts/foundations — the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust and Rajiv Gandhi Foundation — from the list of eligible funds for deductions under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act.

The government says that these trusts/foundations, which were automatically eligible for Section 80G benefit, will now have to come under the regular route for tax cut.

"It has been observed that there are only three funds based on names of the persons in the said section (Sub-section 2 of Section 80G). In order to remove such funds, it is proposed to omit sub-clauses (ii), (iiic) and (iiid) of clause (a) of sub-section (2) of section 80G of the Act," the Finance Bill reads.

Sub-clause (ii) mentions the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund; (iiic) the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust; and (iiid) the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.

This amendment will come into effect from April 1, 2024.

Currently, 50% of the amount donated to four funds — Prime Minister's Drought Relief Fund apart from the three mentioned earlier — is eligible for income tax deductions under sub-section 2 of Section 80G.

> **Those three trusts are registered under section 12A, so they will have to come under the regular regime of 80G in the normal course**
>
> – Nitin Gupta, CBDT chief

Talking to this newspaper, chairman of the Central Board Direct Taxes Nitin Gupta said the three trusts would no longer be eligible for Section 80G benefits automatically.

"How does a trust get 80G benefits? They get themselves registered under section 12A, seek the benefit of 80G registration and 80G (benefit) is granted. Those three trusts are already registered under section 12A, so they will have to come under the regular regime of 80G in the normal course with the approval of the commissioner," Gupta explained.

The move could become another flashpoint between the BJP government and the opposition Congress.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh told this newspaper they have not studied the matter yet, adding they will react on the issue in time.

DELHI COURT CITES MAHATMA, FREES 11 IN JAMIA VIOLENCE

Sharjeel, others made scapegoats, says judgment

JAISON WILSON @ New Delhi

A Delhi court on Saturday quoted Mahatma Gandhi to point out that dissent needs to be given space, while discharging Sharjeel Imam, Safoora Zargar, Asif Iqbal Tanha, and eight others in a case linked to violence at Jamia Millia Islamia in December 2019.

Sharjeel Imam, 35, a scholar and an activist, was one of the key protagonists of a campaign against the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act in the prelude to violence in Delhi in early 2020. The police had registered multiple FIRs against him and others under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Despite being cleared of all charges related to the 2019 Jamia violence, Sharjeel will remain in jail since he is a defendant in the bigger conspiracy case of the 2020 northeast Delhi riots.

In his order on Saturday, Additional Sessions Judge Arul Varma referred to Mahatma Gandhi's quote: "Conscience is the source of dissent."

The judge said investigating agencies should be able to differentiate dissent and insurrection. "The desideratum is for the investigating agencies to discern the difference between dissent and insurrection. The latter has to be quelled indisputably. However, the former has to be given space, a forum, for dissent is perhaps reflective of something which pricks a citizen's conscience," he said.

"The subtext is explicit i.e. dissent has to be encouraged not stifled. However, the caveat is that the dissent should be absolutely peaceful, and should not degenerate into violence," read the 32-page order.

"Marshalling the facts as brought forth from the perusal of the chargesheet and three supplementary chargesheets, this court cannot but arrive at the conclusion that the police were unable to apprehend the actual perpetrators..., but surely managed to rope the persons herein as scapegoats."

The liberty of protesting citizens should not have been lightly interfered with, the court's order stated.

> **Dissent has to be encouraged not stifled. However, the caveat is that the dissent should be absolutely peaceful and not degenerate into violence**
>
> Judgment order

Sharjeel Imam

'Long trial not good'

The court pointed out that the long trial of persons accused in the case is not good for the justice system

BATTLE READY

Pradhan gets BJP charge for K'taka polls

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

THE Central leadership of the BJP on Saturday appointed Union minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** as its in-charge for the forthcoming Karnataka Assembly elections.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Tamil Nadu BJP unit president K Annamalai will be the party's co in-charges for Karnataka.

Pradhan is considered one of the finest strategists in the party after Union home minister Amit Shah and national president J P Nadda. Karnataka will witness a high-stakes poll battle in April or May this year where a rejuvenated Congress sees its best chance to wrest power. P10

Indian regulators will resolve Adani crisis: Goyal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

UNION Minister for Commerce and Industry **Piyush Goyal** said in Bengaluru on Saturday that the regulators in India are very competent and the financial markets in the country are among the most respected and well-regulated in the world.

Responding to queries on billionaire Gautam Adani's Group's loss to the tune of billions of rupees in the markets and Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government allegedly avoiding discussion on the issue in Parliament, Goyal said that the regulators in India will handle the situation and take appropriate action.

He said that investments in shares and stocks go up and down but nowhere have the people of India lost the sum to the extent that is being reported.

"It is share market's valuation loss and not the loss of any individual or people's wealth," he added.

"The financial institutions have already clarified that their money is absolutely secure and safe as the LIC and State Bank of India have released details. Whatever the regulators need to do, they will do," he said. P10

EXPRESS READ

Dalit woman beaten by upper caste man

Koppal: A 30-year-old woman was allegedly beaten up with a slipper by a man from an upper caste after her cow strayed into his agriculture field. The incident took place at Rampur village in Koppal district on February 3. A case has been registered at Kanakagiri police station | P4

PT Usha alleges trespassing at school

New Delhi: Claiming that intruders have started construction in the middle of her academy, Usha School of Athletics in Kinaloor, Kerala, Indian Olympic Association president PT Usha broke down in front of media persons in New Delhi on Saturday | P5

SINGER VANI JAIRAM DIES AT 78

FOUND DEAD WITH INJURY MARKS ON FOREHEAD

Iconic playback singer Vani Jairam, who has sung over 10,000 songs in 19 languages, and who was named for Padma Bhushan Award recently, died in her Chennai home on Saturday | P5

Realty data for heritage sites from sats

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

SATELLITE imaging is now being used to establish the true real estate of ancient archaeological sites in India. These are governed by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act. According to the AMASR guidelines published by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), a site should be recommended for protection based on its authenticity and integrity.

Dr MB Rajani, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru, with the help of satellite imaging from Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is trying to create a database of the 30 historical sites that feature in UNESCO's World Heritage list.

"This database has to be used for bringing on record the integrity and extent of the historical sites so that we can protect the wholeness of the monuments and allow development activities keeping in mind the same," said Director, NIAS, Dr Shailesh Nayak. | P5

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